

**SWITCH FABRIC CAPABLE OF AGGREGATING MULTIPLE CHIPS AND
LINKS FOR HIGH BANDWIDTH OPERATION**

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A switching fabric capable of supporting high bandwidth switching operations is disclosed. In one aspect, multiple switching chips and multiple links thereto are used to provide a high bandwidth switching fabric. In
10 another aspect, payload data is transmitted following grant of its previously transmitted corresponding request. In yet another aspect, the switching fabric operates in a pipelined manner.